Practice of Untouchability

119. DR. Y. LASKHMI PRASAD: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether untouchability is being widely practiced in many villages including "Two glass system" for serving tea to dalits and others and prevention of collection of water from village tanks; and

(b) if so, the action taken to come to rescue of the dalits who are being discriminated inspite of the constitutional safeguards?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI): (a) and (b) The incidence of untouchability is reported to have gone down considerably as a result of various steps taken by Government, such as enactment of a special legislation namely the Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955, providing assistance under a special scheme for implementation of the Protection of Civil Rights Act. etc.

2. Some incidences of practice of "Two Glass System" were reported in the State of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Rajasthan and Tamil Nadu. Concerned State Governments have indicated that appropriate action was taken in this regard.

3. State Governments/UT Administrations have been requested to accord priority to implementation of the Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955 and extend required assistance for ensuring that there is no discrimination on the ground of untouchability. State Governments, where pendency of cases, is high have also been requested to set up exclusive Special Courts for expeditious disposal of cases registered under the Act.